

Capsule Summary
SM-487
Carver Heights Community Center
Lexington Park
Private

1943

The Carver Heights Community Center is chiefly significant because of its association with World War II. Built to serve African American civilian employees of the Patuxent Naval Air Station, the Community Center was constructed using funds provided to the Federal Public Housing Authority under the authority of the Lanham Act. Although the interior has been adapted for a variety of contemporary uses, the exterior of the building remains largely unaltered.

The National Housing Agency approved construction of Carver Heights at the same time that it approved construction of the southern section of Lexington Park. Notably, this approval was granted without the request of the Navy, and included the erection of 120 family units, 72 dormitory units and a community building with limited restaurant and shopping facilities for African American employees of the Patuxent Naval Air Station. Construction began in 1943, but lagged because of poor weather conditions and shortages of building materials. Carver Heights was finally ready for occupation in late July and August of 1944. The Community Center contained the housing office, a U.S.O. hall, a barber shop, and various other offices that served the Carver Heights housing complex.

Only the Community Center and one of the original one-story, cinderblock dwellings remain standing today. This dwellings, similar to those designed by Louis Justement in the southern section of the Lexington Park Survey District (SM-490), is located at the western border of the complex. Because of this similarity in design and the same year of construction, it seems likely that the Washington D. C. architect designed both these houses and the Community Center. Unfortunately, none of the original blueprints for Carver Heights are known to exist.

SM-487, Carver Heights Community Center
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Modern Period, 1930 - .

Historic Period Theme: Architecture/Community Planning
Government
Social

Resource Type

Category: Structure

Historic Environment: Planned Community

Historic Function and Use: USO Building for African American community

Known Design Source: None

7. Description

Survey No. SM-487

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Carver Heights Community Center is located on the north side of Lincoln Avenue in the housing subdivision now known as "Southampton" in Lexington Park, St. Mary's County, Maryland. There are no outbuildings on the property although a brick barbeque grill is located on the north side of the building. A buffer of trees acts as a partition between the community center and a ball field located to the north. An asphalt parking lot is located on the south and east sides of the building. The Community Center faces south towards the houses in the subdivision.

Built around 1943, the Carver Heights Community Center is a one-story, cinderblock structure. The building consists of a dominant central bay with a slanted shed roof and subsidiary wings that project to the east and west. The west wing is capped by a shallow gable roof and the east wing by a shed roof.

The south (main) elevation consists of a central bay that is slightly taller than the subsidiary wings. A bank of five windows that alternate with brick pilasters pierce the central bay. The windows are finished with a row of brick headers that comprise the sill of the window frame. The shed roof of this bay has a medium overhang which shelters the large windows below. To the west of the central bay is an alcove that shelters an entrance door. The western one-story wing is pierced by a bank of three two-over-two sash windows with alternating brick pilasters and then further to the west by nine two-over-two sash windows. To the east of the central bay is a double door entrance with a single-light transom, now boarded over. This doorway is sheltered by a small flat roof porch. The eastern one-story wing is pierced by two three-over-three sash windows. Further to the east are eight one-over-one sash windows. At the end of this wing is an entrance door with a four-light transom sheltered by a small porch. A large interior brick chimney pierces the roof of this wing. Stepped back from the main block of the east wing is a small service wing. This structure is pierced by two one-over-one sash windows and four one-light windows, both now boarded over. A double door entrance and a two-over-one sash window are located at the end of the wing and are sheltered by a small porch.

The east elevation of the Community Center is pierced by two modern entrance doors and five one-over-one sash windows. Two vented openings pierce the basement level of the building.

The north elevation of the east wing is pierced by a series of window openings, many of which have been boarded over. The east service wing is pierced by three windows. The main block of the east wing is pierced by two individual windows and two banks of three windows, all of which are boarded over. The next portion of the

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-487

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1943–44 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Carver Heights Community Center is chiefly significant because of its association with World War II. Built to serve African American civilian employees of the Patuxent Naval Air Station, the Community Center was constructed using funds provided to the Federal Public Housing Authority under the authority of the Lanham Act. Although the interior has been adapted for a variety of contemporary uses, the exterior of the building remains largely unaltered.

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Three months before completion of Carver Heights, the Navy reported to the Federal Public Housing Administration (FPHA) that there was no demand for housing for African American base employees and requested that the housing be used for white occupants instead. The FPHA refused the Navy's request. In December of 1944, only 17 residents occupied the 72 unit dormitory and only 35 families occupied the 120 family units. Within a year, however, the complex was 86% occupied.

Only the Community Center and one of the original one-story, cinderblock dwellings remain standing today. This dwellings, similar to those designed by Louis Justement in the southern section of the Lexington Park Survey District (SM-490), is located at the western border of the complex. Because of this similarity in design and the same year of construction, it seems likely that the Washington D. C. architect designed both these houses and the Community Center. Unfortunately, none of the original blueprints for Carver Heights are known to exist.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-487

Historical Section, Dep. Chief Naval Operations for Air, "United States Naval Administration in World War II." Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, MD, 1945.

10. Geographical DataAcreage of nominated property 1.4 acresQuadrangle name Solomons IslandQuadrangle scale 1: 24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyororganization St. Mary's County DPZdate February 1995

street & number

telephone 301-475-4662city or town Leonardtownstate MD

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: ~~Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438~~

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

SM-487, Carver Heights Community Center
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

east wing is pierced by three two-over-two sash windows, an entrance door, two two-over-two sash windows, a second door, and four two-over-two sash windows. The central bay is pierced by a series of large window openings like those on the south elevation. The original windows have been replaced, with the upper third of the window boarded over and the lower two-thirds infilled with a one-over-one sash window. The west wing is pierced by a seven two-over-two sash windows.

The west elevation is blind. A fenced-in, outdoor play area is located on the west end of this wing.

SM-487, Carver Heights Community Center
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Most of the civilians who lived here had moved to St. Mary's County from southern states such as Virginia in order to work on the base as contractors. In some cases, wives took in washing or worked as domestics to supplement the family income while husbands worked on the base. Unlike the convenient location of homes in the Lexington Park Survey District, Carver Heights was located about a mile south of the Patuxent Naval Air Station gate. No one owned cars, so residents walked to the gate where they were then met by a bus and transported to their job site.

The Community Center contained the housing office, a U.S.O. hall, a barber shop, and various other offices that served the Carver Heights housing complex. The closest grocery store was the A & P, now Food Land, located just outside of the base gate. A small general store run by Mr. Baldwin out of one half of a concrete housing unit provided Carver Heights residents with vital provisions in a convenient location.

The Carver Heights Community Center was sold by the Federal Government to the St. Mary's County Commissioners in 1963. Around the same time, the remainder of the property was sold to a private owner who demolished many of the original dwellings in the mid-1970s and replaced them with single family, one-story, ranch-style homes and two-story townhouses. Carver Heights was then renamed "Southampton." Today, the Community Center is occupied by a health clinic and the community head start program.

SM-487, Carver Heights
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: Board of County Commissioners of St. Mary's County

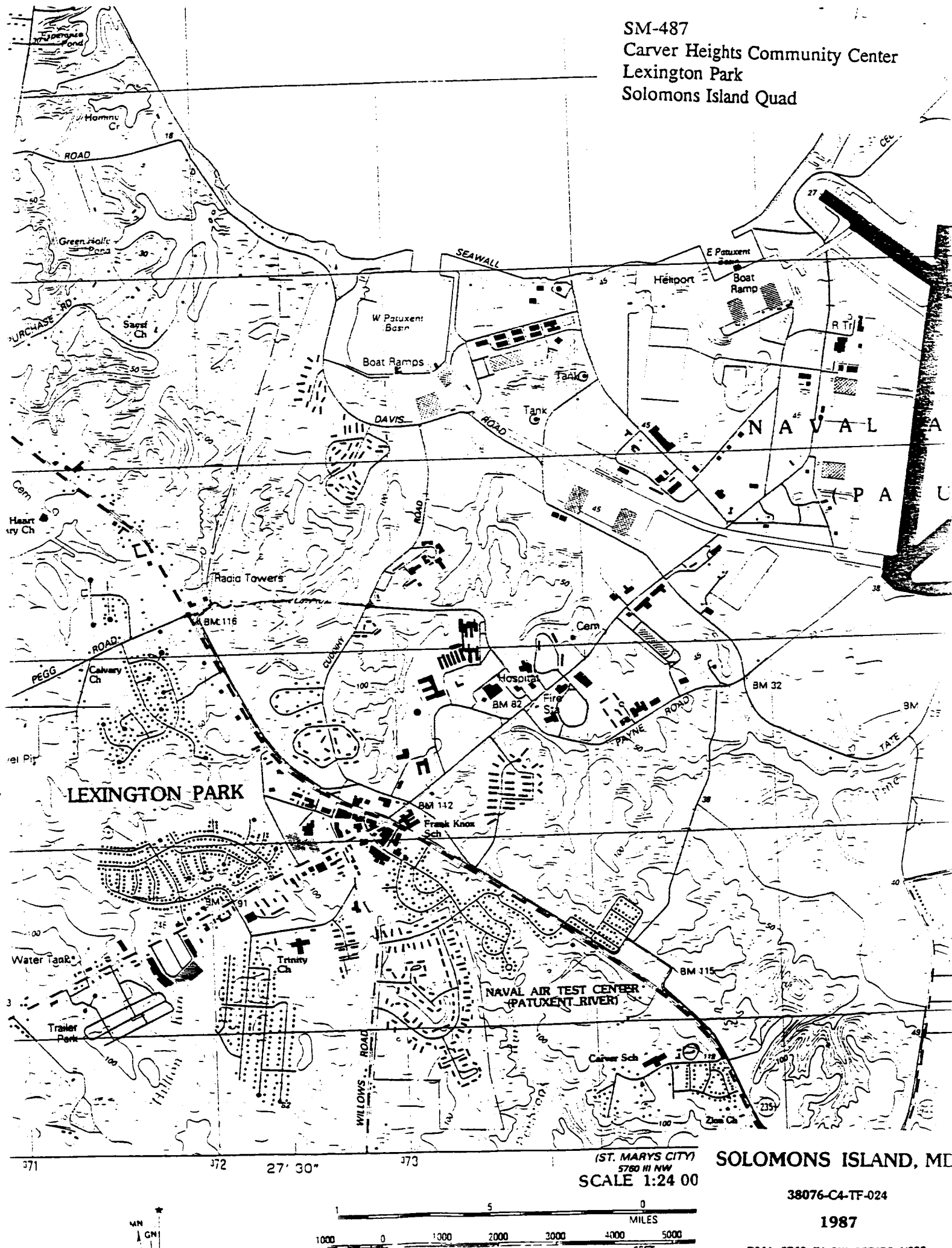
FROM: U.S.A. acting by and through the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare acting by the Regional Director, Region III, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber CBG 109, folio 215.

DATE: September 3, 1963.

NOTES: Transfer of 1.4239 acres being "a portion of the Patuxent Naval Air Station housing project identified as Parcel E on a plat prepared by Koval and Eldridge, Court Square Building, Leonardtown, MD, entitled Patuxent Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, Maryland, Section One, Bay Election District #8, St. Mary's County, File No. 368A, dated May 2, 1963" being a portion of land acquired by the U.S.A. by Condemnation Civil Action 2064 U.S. District Court, District of Maryland and transferred by the Housing and Home Finance Agency to the Department of the Navy in 1947.

SM-487
 Carver Heights Community Center
 Lexington Park
 Solomons Island Quad



SOLOMONS ISLAND, MD

(ST. MARYS CITY)
 5780 MI NW
 SCALE 1:24 00

38076-C4-TF-024

1987



SN = 187

Career Heights Community Center

St. Marg's County

E. Hughes

March 1995

MS, HHO

1/2

700 Elevation



